Cut Razor Bumps

The safe way to smooth skin

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No man wants his face or neckline riddled with razor bumps and in--grown hairs, so we asked dermatologist and laser surgeon Eliot F. Battle Jr., MD, cofounder/director of Cultura Cosmetic Medical Spa in Washington, DC, for the latest bump-beating tips:

1. Shave hair wet. Wet hair absorbs more water, making it easier to trim, says Battle. Shaving gel is more moisturizing than foam.
2. Don’t pull skin taut. Stretching the skin makes hairs pop out then recede into the skin, causing irritation.
3. Avoid close shaves. “You want the razor to be blunt,” Battle says. Try Bump Fighter or Gillette Double Edge—they won’t pierce skin.
4. Skip depilatories. Hair removers can irritate skin, causing it to darken and look leathery.
5. Reduce inflammation. Every second or third clip, apply a hydrocortisone cream, like Cortaid.
6. Go high-tech. Laser hair removal can destroy the hair follicle, inhibiting regrowth and reducing the amount of hair you have to shave. Multiple treatments are necessary, and even then you may not be able to retire your razor. Make sure your practitioner has an Nd:YAG laser, otherwise skin of color will blister and discolor. Battle says lasers can create an unnatural bald look, so they’re better for necks and backs than for faces.

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